

2024 HSC Retail Services Marking Guidelines

Section I

Multiple-choice Answer Key

Question	Answer
1	B
2	D
3	A
4	C
5	B
6	C
7	D
8	B
9	C
10	D
11	C
12	B
13	A
14	A
15	B

Section II

Question 16 (a)

Criteria	Marks
• Explains why a chain of command is important in a department store	2
• Provides some relevant information	1

Sample answer:

A chain of command helps a department store with allocating staff responsibilities. Staff are aware of whom to report to for certain issues.

Question 16 (b)

Criteria	Marks
• Demonstrates a clear understanding of how a retail services worker could deal with positive and negative feedback about their performance	3
• Demonstrates some understanding of how a retail services worker could deal with positive and/or negative feedback about their performance	2
• Provides some relevant information	1

Sample answer:

A retail services worker could acknowledge the praise and express their thanks for any positive recognition. When managing negative feedback, the retail services worker could actively listen to the concerns and ask questions to improve their performance.

Question 17 (a)

Criteria	Marks
• Demonstrates an understanding of why it is important to follow store procedures when recording takings	2
• Provides some relevant information	1

Sample answer:

Following store procedures when recording takings allows retailers to match the stock on hand with sales data. It becomes easier to identify discrepancies and promptly address concerns of theft or errors.

Question 17 (b)

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines a potential security risk related to the back dock in a community pharmacy/retail workplace 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some relevant information 	1

Sample answer:

Back docks often have multiple entry points such as delivery doors and employee entrances. If these entry points are not properly secured, unauthorised individuals could enter the area.

Answers could include:

- Theft of merchandise
- Vandalism

Question 17 (c)

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explains clearly how the procedure could be improved 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates some understanding of how the procedure could be improved 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some relevant information 	1

Sample answer:

The procedure should be changed to state that no login details be shared to prevent employees from misusing a colleague's login details. Also, passwords should be changed on a more regular basis to make it difficult for unauthorised persons to access the POS equipment.

Answers could include:

- All employees should receive training on POS equipment, regardless of whether they request training or not.

Question 18 (a)

Criteria	Marks
• Explains how collegial relationships between staff members improve the quality of customer service and provides an example	2
• Provides an example/provides some relevant information	1

Sample answer:

Customer needs are more likely to be addressed because staff communicate important information with each other.

Question 18 (b)

Criteria	Marks
• Outlines a source of information that a sales assistant could use to handle a customer enquiry about refunds	2
• Provides some relevant information	1

Sample answer:

A sales assistant could seek advice from their supervisor about the refund process. The supervisor could provide details about legally acceptable reasons for refunding merchandise.

Answers could include:

- NSW Fair Trading
- Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
- Experienced colleague

Question 18 (c)

Criteria	Marks
• Explains a number of task management techniques that can be applied during these periods	4
• Describes some task management techniques that can be applied during these periods	3
• Outlines ONE task management technique that can be applied during these periods	2
• Provides some relevant information	1

Sample answer:

A community pharmacy/retail workplace could adopt flexible scheduling. This will result in an appropriate number of staff being rostered to work to meet the expected number of customers. Staff could be trained in multiple roles in order to assist during busier times. Also, during quieter times, less essential tasks could be completed because staff have more time due to fewer customers requiring support. Additionally, staff could use technology to assign tasks and track their progress.

Answers could include:

- Prioritising core tasks during busier periods

Question 19 (a)

Criteria	Marks
• Justifies a selling technique a retail assistant could use to sell a mobile phone to a customer	3
• Outlines a selling technique a retail assistant could use to sell a mobile phone to a customer	2
• Provides some relevant information	1

Sample answer:

A retail assistant could use the technique of selling the benefits of the mobile phone to the customer because it aims to match the customer's needs to the right product. By highlighting the benefits, a retail assistant is able to connect to the customer's emotional buying motive.

Answers could include:

- Cross-selling
- Offering alternatives
- Top down
- Up-selling
- Suggestive selling

Question 19 (b)

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains benefits to a retailer of maintaining accurate records of stolen items 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines benefits to a retailer of maintaining accurate records of stolen items OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains ONE benefit to a retailer of maintaining accurate records of stolen items 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some relevant information 	1

Sample answer:

Maintaining an accurate record of stolen items will assist the retailer when making insurance claims for stolen merchandise so the claim is approved. Also, it may help the retailer to identify patterns of theft so they can improve the security of those items.

Answers could include:

- Accurate data is maintained about stock levels
- Legal purposes for police investigations

Question 20 (a)

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes appropriate communication technologies that retailers could use for internally coordinating visual displays in a chain of retail stores 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines appropriate communication technologies that retailers could use for internally coordinating visual displays in a chain of retail stores 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines a communication technology that retailers could use for internally coordinating visual displays 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some relevant information 	1

Sample answer:

Retailers could use the intranet to coordinate visual displays across the chain of stores. It is a private network that allows images to be uploaded for comments and discussion. Also, emails can be used to exchange ideas and track conversations about the displays. Images and files can be attached to an email, allowing for quick correspondence and easy storage for later use.

Answers could include:

- Cloud-based platforms
- Video conferencing tools
- Instant messaging applications

Question 20 (b)

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains strategies a community pharmacy/retail workplace could use to ensure industry standards are met when serving customers Provides relevant workplace examples 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains ONE strategy a community pharmacy/retail workplace could use to ensure industry standards are met when serving customers Provides workplace examples 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes strategies a community pharmacy/retail workplace could use to ensure industry standards are met when serving customers Includes workplace example(s) 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines a strategy a community pharmacy/retail workplace could use to ensure industry standards are met when serving customers 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some relevant information 	1

Sample answer:

An industry standard could be that customers expect retail employees to have sufficient product knowledge to address their concerns. Therefore, staff should be provided with training on the business' merchandise to meet this standard. For example, a retail employee should be able to identify the features and benefits of a mobile phone to an inquiring customer. Another standard is that customers expect immediate and efficient service. Hence, businesses should utilise technology to provide speedier customer service. For example, businesses can offer online shopping platforms.

Answers could include:

- Range of payment options
- Well-presented, organised store
- Privacy and data security
- Effective communication skills

Section III

Question 21 (a)

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a thorough explanation of possible impacts on merchandising if a retailer reviews the products and/or services of its competitors 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an explanation of ONE possible impact on merchandising if a retailer reviews the products and/or services of its competitors 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes the possible impact on merchandising if a retailer reviews the products and/or services of its competitors 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies a possible impact on merchandising if a retailer reviews the products and/or services of its competitors 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some relevant information 	1

Sample answer:

If a retailer reviews competitors' products and/or services, they can gain valuable insights into market trends and customer preferences. As a result, the retailer can alter their merchandise range to align with changing customer demands in order to generate sales. Also, it could help a retailer adjust their pricing strategies so that they remain competitive in the market. The retailer could create displays with discounted items to attract price-sensitive customers to make additional purchases, without having an impact on the retailer's profits.

Answers could include:

- A retailer can position their merchandise in a way that highlights unique selling points to attract customers from competitors.
- A retailer can identify gaps where competitors lack appropriate merchandise and can then source innovative merchandise to foster brand loyalty.

Question 21 (b)

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a thorough justification of effective merchandising and placement strategies that can be applied to reduce the risk of damage to merchandise Supports response with relevant workplace examples 	9–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a sound justification of effective merchandising and placement strategies that can be applied to reduce the risk of damage to merchandise Includes relevant workplace examples 	7–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes merchandising and placement strategies that can be applied to reduce the risk of damage to merchandise Includes workplace example(s) 	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines merchandising and/or placement strategies that can be applied to reduce the risk of damage to merchandise 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some relevant information 	1–2

Answers could include:

Merchandising strategies (to enhance the presentation of merchandise):

- Logical and attractive product arrangements to make it easy for customers to find items and reduce handling
- Secure and well-protected display areas for fragile or valuable items (eg glass cabinets, locked display cases)
- Clear signage about the fragility or specific handling requirements of certain merchandise
- FIFO stock rotation
- Well-spaced, organised displays
- Visual inspections of merchandise to remove damaged items
- Use protective materials (eg bubble wrap, packing peanuts).

Placement strategies (positioning of merchandise):

- Strong and secure fixtures and shelving (anchored to the wall or floor to prevent tipping)
- Adequate shelving, stacking and labelling of storage areas for excess stock to maintain the quality of the merchandise
- Train staff on the proper placement of merchandise, especially for fragile or valuable items
- Incorporate security measures such as anti-theft devices, security tags, or surveillance cameras, to deter theft and protect merchandise
- Place heavier or bulkier items on lower shelves or closer to the ground to reduce the risk of items falling from a height.

Question 22 (a)

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a thorough explanation of the possible impacts on food merchandising if a retailer identifies critical control points in food preparation and handling 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an explanation of ONE possible impact on food merchandising if a retailer identifies critical control points in food preparation and handling 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes the possible impacts on food merchandising if a retailer identifies critical control points in food preparation and handling 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies a possible impact on food merchandising if a retailer identifies critical control points in food preparation and handling 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some relevant information 	1

Sample answer:

If a retailer identifies critical control points (CCPs), it will help the retailer stay compliant with food safety requirements. As a result, this compliance with quality assurance could then be used as a selling point and a key element of merchandising materials. Furthermore, CCPs in food preparation and handling can influence how products are presented and displayed in-store. Thus, a retailer could highlight the freshness, quality and safety of food products through well-organised and attractive displays.

Answers could include:

- CCPs could reduce costs associated with food spoilage and the savings could be used towards merchandising the food products OR be reflected in lower prices that are displayed when merchandising.
- A retailer that prioritises CCPs can differentiate itself from competitors and highlight this through food merchandising.

Question 22 (b)

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a detailed justification of effective food merchandising and placement strategies that can be applied to reduce the risk of food spoilage Supports response with relevant workplace examples 	9–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a thorough justification of effective food merchandising and placement strategies that can be applied to reduce the risk of food spoilage Includes relevant workplace examples 	7–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes food merchandising and placement strategies that can be applied to reduce the risk of food spoilage Includes workplace example(s) 	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines food merchandising and/or placement strategies that can be applied to reduce the risk of food spoilage 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some relevant information 	1–2

Answers could include:

Food merchandising strategies (to enhance the presentation of food merchandise):

- Logical and attractive product arrangements to make it easy for customers to find items and reduce handling
- Group similar food items together to minimise temperature fluctuations (eg dairy products in one area)
- Organise food displays (eg freezer display units) according to temperature requirements. Separate raw and cooked items on display
- Clear signage about use-by or best-before dates and storage instructions
- FIFO stock rotation
- Well-spaced, organised displays
- Visual inspections of food merchandise to identify items near their expiration dates and positioning them prominently to encourage their sale before they spoil
- Use LED lights that emit less heat and UV radiation, which can affect the shelf life of products
- Use protective materials (e.g. food containers).

Placement strategies (positioning of food merchandise):

- Strong and secure fixtures and shelving (anchored to the wall or floor to prevent tipping)
- Regularly check refrigeration thermometers to monitor the conditions of stored food items
- Adequate shelving, stacking and labelling of food storage areas for excess food stock to maintain the quality of the food merchandise
- Train staff on the proper placement of food merchandise
- Regularly clean and disinfect display units to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria and to maintain optimal temperature and humidity levels
- Use appropriate packaging for different types of food products. Vacuum-sealed packaging, airtight containers, and moisture-resistant packaging can extend the shelf life of products
- Establish an efficient waste management system to ensure the safe disposal of expired or damaged food items.

Question 23 (a)

Criteria	Marks
• Provides a thorough explanation of how an employee could meet the needs of a customer presenting with symptom-based requests	5
• Provides an explanation of how an employee could meet the needs of a customer presenting with symptom-based requests	4
• Describes how an employee could meet the needs of a customer presenting with symptom-based requests	3
• Identifies how an employee could meet the needs of a customer presenting with symptom-based requests	2
• Provides some relevant information	1

Sample answer:

When staff recognise symptom-based requests and have good product knowledge, they can offer tailored assistance to customers which can lead to improved customer satisfaction. This may involve offering complementary products that customers may not have considered, maximising cross-selling sales. Also, it improves the ability of staff to enhance patient safety. This is because staff can verify the customer's needs by asking follow-up questions or referring the customer to a pharmacist.

Answers could include:

- Personnel can use symptom-based requests as an opportunity to educate customers about their health conditions.
- Demonstrates compliance with ethical standards where recommendations are made that address the underlying issues.

Question 23 (b)

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a detailed justification of effective strategies that can be applied to limit contamination and prevent transmission of infection in a community pharmacy workplace Supports response with relevant workplace examples 	9–10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a thorough justification of effective strategies that can be applied to limit contamination and prevent transmission of infection in a community pharmacy workplace Includes relevant workplace examples 	7–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describes strategies that can be applied to limit contamination and prevent transmission of infection in a community pharmacy workplace Includes workplace example(s) 	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outlines strategies that can be applied to limit contamination and/or prevent transmission of infection in a community pharmacy workplace 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some relevant information 	1–2

Sample answer:

Strategies to limit contamination:

- Hand hygiene (eg handwashing)
- Use of personal protective equipment (eg gloves)
- Store medications according to their requirements
- Housekeeping practices
- Separate medication preparation from customer service areas
- Clearly label medications
- Infection control audits
- Provide disposable items (eg tissues) and waste bins with lids for proper disposal of used items that contain bodily fluids.

Strategies to prevent transmission of infection:

- Alter pharmacy layout to maintain physical distance
- Signage to indicate safe distancing and hand hygiene practices
- Transparent barriers at customer service areas
- Face masks, face shields and eye protection
- Screen patients before entering for symptoms of infection
- Promote telepharmacy services or online prescription refills
- Train pharmacy staff on infection control practices
- Housekeeping practices (particularly for high-touch surfaces).

Section IV

Question 24

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of WHS responsibilities in a community pharmacy/retail workplace • Makes an informed judgement about the extent to which WHS is a shared responsibility in a community pharmacy/retail workplace • Uses relevant workplace examples and industry terminology in a logical and cohesive response 	13–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a thorough understanding of WHS responsibilities in a community pharmacy/retail workplace • Makes a judgement (implicitly or explicitly) about the extent to which WHS is a shared responsibility in a community pharmacy/retail workplace • Uses relevant workplace examples and industry terminology in a logical response 	10–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a sound understanding of WHS responsibilities in a community pharmacy/retail workplace • Makes some judgement (implicitly or explicitly) about the extent to which WHS is a shared responsibility in a community pharmacy/retail workplace • Uses workplace examples and/or industry terminology 	7–9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates some understanding of WHS responsibilities in a community pharmacy/retail workplace 	4–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates some relevant information about WHS 	1–3

Answers could include:

- Acknowledge that WHS is everyone’s responsibility in the workplace and the implications of this responsibility
- WHS rights, duties, responsibilities of the person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU), officer and worker (as defined in the legislation)
- Consequences of failure to observe (non-compliance) WHS workplace policy and procedures and legislative requirements
- Industry and workplace requirements for monitoring and reporting in relation to workplace safety
- Roles and responsibilities of relevant personnel in WHS consultation and participation.

Extent of Shared Responsibility

- WHS legislation imposes different responsibilities and authoritative powers on WHS duty holders.
- Risk management is only effective with engagement from all stakeholders.
- Participation and consultation from all stakeholders will enhance the safety culture of the workplace.

2024 HSC Retail Services Mapping Grid

Section I

Question	Marks	HSC content – focus area
1	1	Safety – incidents, accidents and emergencies – page 28
2	1	Customer service – customers – page 21
3	1	Customer service – customers – page 21
4	1	Safety – work health and safety (WHS) – page 25
5	1	Working in the industry – retail services worker – page 40
6	1	Sales and security – security – page 34
7	1	Safety – safe work procedures – page 27
8	1	Customer service – quality customer service – page 22
9	1	Working in the industry – employment – page 39
10	1	Customer service – communication technology – page 23
11	1	Working in the industry – working with others – page 41
12	1	Working in the industry – cultural diversity – pages 41–42
13	1	Working in the industry – work practices – page 40
14	1	Working in the industry – misunderstandings and conflict – page 42
15	1	Sales and security – point-of-sale – page 35

Section II

Question	Marks	HSC content – focus area
16 (a)	2	Working in the industry – nature of the industry – page 38
16 (b)	3	Working in the industry – retail services worker – page 40
17 (a)	2	Sales and security – point-of-sale – page 35
17 (b)	2	Sales and security – minimise security risks and theft – page 32
17 (c)	3	Sales and security – security – page 34
18 (a)	2	Customer service – quality customer service – page 22
18 (b)	2	Customer service – customer inquiries – page 22
18 (c)	4	Working in the industry – work practices – page 41
19 (a)	3	Sales and security – sell products and services – page 32
19 (b)	3	Sales and security – minimise security risks and theft – page 33
20 (a)	4	Customer service – communication technology – page 23
20 (b)	5	Customer service – quality customer service – page 21

Section III

Question	Marks	HSC content – focus area
21 (a)	5	General selling – display merchandise – page 44 General selling – advise on products and services – page 46
21 (b)	10	General selling – merchandise – page 44 General selling – display merchandise – page 45

Question	Marks	HSC content – focus area
22 (a)	5	Food selling – food safety – page 50 Food selling – display food merchandise – page 51
22 (b)	10	Food selling – merchandise – page 49 Food selling – display food merchandise – page 51 Food selling – display food merchandise – page 52
23 (a)	5	Community pharmacy – customer service within a pharmacy – page 56 Community pharmacy – key product and service areas within a pharmacy – page 57
23 (b)	10	Community pharmacy – infection prevention and control – page 59

Section IV

Question	Marks	HSC content – focus area
24	15	Safety – work health and safety (WHS) – page 25 Safety – WHS compliance – page 25 Safety – WHS compliance – page 26 Safety – WHS consultation and participation – page 26